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Kenneth

THE
VICTORY OF FAITH;

OR

The Christian Conqueror.

A

FUNERAL SERMON

FOR

Selina Countess Dowager of Huntingdon.

BY JOHN DAWSON,
MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL, EVESHAM.

Published at the Request of several of the Congregation.

[PRICE SIX-PENCE.]

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VICTORY OF LADY H.

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[Illegible text]

FUNERAL SERMON,
UPON THE DEATH OF
THE RIGHT HONORABLE
Selina Countess Dowager of Huntingdon,
WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE, JUNE 17,
IN THE
Eighty-Fourth Year of her Age.

WITH SOME ACCOUNT OF
HER LIFE AND DYING EXPERIENCE.

Preached in the Chapel, Evesham,
ON SUNDAY, JULY 10, 1791.

K
BY JOHN DAWSON.

*And they embalmed him, and he was put in a Coffin
in Egypt.* Gen. 1. 26.

BIRMINGHAM,
PRINTED AND SOLD BY J. THOMPSON;
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THE GREAT DOCK OF LONDON

WHO DEPARTED THIS LINE, JUNE 17

IN THE

EXPRESS LINE OF SHIPS

WITH SOME ACCOUNT OF

THE LIFE AND DYING EXPERIENCE



Printed in the

ON SUNDAY, JUNE 17

BY JOHN DAWSON

At the end of the line, and in the year 1841
Oct. 1. 1841

MANCHESTER

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1841

A SERMON.

*For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world:
and this is the VICTORY that overcometh the
world, even our FAITH. 1 John, v. 4.*

I HAVE made choice of the words which I have now read to you upon this occasion, for the following reasons.

1. Because they were *favourite words* with our deceased friend. Long experience had taught her much of the world and the evil thereof. She was not so little acquainted with human nature as to be ignorant that it was too weak, unaided by divine and supernatural power to overcome the world. It was her happiness, that she was well acquainted with the nature, operation, and power of divine faith; and knew by happy experience its all-sufficiency to overcome the world; and therefore would often adopt the words of our text as her own; This is the victory—even our faith!

2. Because faith in the general is a despised principle among men. It is but little known;

and less understood. The Holy Ghost is its divine author. It is of his operation; and its effects are blessed, and happy *. The scriptures assure us, that *without faith we cannot please God*; nor honour him as the God of truth †. All our enjoyments in the ways of God; all our pleasure in his ordinances; all our comfort in his promises, arise from faith in the heart, or an assurance of the reality of the salvation of Jesus; and a good hope of interest in it. So that faith appears to be the only principle whereby we honour God; and enjoy good in our own souls.

In the preceeding verses the apostle has given us a lovely description of a converted man. As, first, He is a believer in Christ ‡; not a superficial observer of his doctrine. He is one who knows himself to be indebted to Christ's blood for pardon; to his righteousness for justification; to his grace and holy spirit for a new life. Secondly, He is a lover of the children of God, and that because they are his children. He considers all such as belonging to one family; he knows they are all in union with one mystical

* Col. ii. 12. compared with Rom. viii. 11.

† John iii. 33. compared with 1 John v. 10.

‡ *The preaching of the cross to the worldly wise is foolishness*, says the apostle Paul. Time was when the conduct of unbelievers was to reject the doctrine of the preachers of Christianity; and the writings from whence they fetched these doctrines; but the fashion in our days is to embrace the bible as divine revelation and explode the doctrines it teaches, merely to avoid the imputation of infidelity; so that by a believer we are often forced to understand no more than one who complaisantly receives the bible as divine revelation, but who loves not its contents.

head; and rejoices in the discovery of the image of Christ upon them. Thirdly, He is a keeper of God's commandments; and that from principle. His duty is his delight, and though he feels much opposition from the world without, and a corrupt nature within, yet he goes forward by the help of the Lord, and rejoices in the mortification of the old man. The lower he is humbled, the higher is his soul's exaltation.

In the text the apostle lays down a certain proposition, viz. "Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world." Every regenerate person is victorious. And then he proceeds to explain this proposition by the following words, "And this is the VICTORY that overcometh the world, even our faith." The warfare is spiritual; so are the weapons; so is the conquest!

I proceed to observe upon the text.

Observe, 1. That every Christian man is a regenerate man. He is a new and heaven-born soul. Nothing is more fallacious than to talk of Christianity *without* a change of heart. This being the very essence of the experimental part of Christianity; and the main spring of all holy, true, and acceptable obedience.

Observe, 2. That the world is the Christian man's enemy; and he cannot be its friend, unless he pray for its salvation. If any man will be the friend of the world, he is an enemy to God. No regenerate man can love the maxims of the world. It is an indication of a bad heart, when we can adopt the Christian creed, and mingle with

with the sons of iniquity. When it appears a matter of indifference with us whether we are at the table of the Lord, or the table of devils. 1 Cor. x. 21.

Observe, 3. But the Christian man is the world's conqueror. It is by the word of God applied to the heart with a divine power, and unction that the soul is transformed. "Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Rom. x. 17. This conviction being wrought and the soul renewed; he enlists cheerfully, and willingly under the banner of Christ; "They shall be willing in the day of thy power;" Psalm cx. And engages most earnestly to fight against all enemies who may oppose him in the way, with at least some degree of hope (if not assurance) that he shall prevail, and overcome, through him who has loved him. Rom. viii. 37.

Having made these short remarks upon the text, I shall now,

I. Endeavour to shew what it is to be born of God, or the nature of the new-birth.

II. What is affirmed of the new-born man, viz. that he overcometh the world; and the nature of his conquest.

III. The mean by which he overcometh the world, by faith; this is the VICTORY that overcometh the world, even our faith.

1. The nature of the new-birth.

The law of nature and the law of God teach us, that God is necessarily the creator of us all; that he made us holy and upright. It could
never

never be consistent with the blessed, holy, and righteous Jehovah, to sow the principles of sin in our nature, in the day of our creation, whereby we must of necessity be warped to disobedience. He made man in his own *image* or likeness * ; gave him a law exactly suited to his nature ; to which he annexed the penalty of death, upon failure of conformity thereto. The way and manner sin made its entrance into the world, and took hold of every son of Adam, is explained by the Apostle: " Wherefore, as by " one man sin *entered into* the world, and *death* " by sin ; and so death passed upon *all men*, for " that all have sinned." Rom. v. 12. Here the apostle shows how we were all plunged into misery by the disobedience, and transgression of our first parent. He being our federal head and representative ; and having engaged for us all, brought us all under the curse.

But this is not the only evil which followed transgression. Had the curse of the law been the only evil we had been subjected to by the disobedience of our first parent this might have been removed by the death of Christ ; without any necessity of the change enforced in the gospel ; and explained in the text. By the transgression of the first man we were robbed of our innocence
and

* ————— Whose fault ?

Whose but his own ? Ingrate he had of me
All he could : I made him just and right,
Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall.

MILTON.

purity; all the powers of body and mind are become polluted and depraved. This body which should be a machine by which the soul should be active in the holy services of God; by its brutal appetites and lusts only makes the soul capable, and assists it in more horrid scenes of iniquity. "Wherein in times past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that *now worketh* in the children of disobedience: among whom also we all had our conversation in times past, in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh*, and of the mind: and were by nature children of wrath, even as others." Eph. ii. 2, 3.

Hence arises the necessity of the *new birth*; which is not merely to become good moral people, (as it is usually termed,) to change our outward conduct, and become more decent. Circumstances in some few instances would exclude the necessity of the new birth if this was all required, (since there are some characters in the world whose external conduct in the eyes of men have been ever unblameable) but our blessed Lord says, "Except *a man* be born again *he cannot* see the kingdom of God." It is not except the drunkard be turned from his drunkenness; the unclean person from his debaucheries; the swearer from his swearing; the sabbath-breaker from sabbath breaking; but except *a man*

* Flesh and mind are by nature combined against God.

man, that is, every man who is an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven, must be a partaker of divine grace; must be a renewed, a changed man.

The new birth then is a communication of divine light to the soul. When God created the world, his almighty *fiat* gave it its existence, all universal space, before was one dark chaos. He begins his work with these words, "Let there be light;" and it is added, "there was light!" Sin brought the soul into darkness, and profound ignorance both of itself and God; and being carnal and fold under sin, understands nothing which is of a spiritual nature.

The apostle speaking of this divine change, 2 Cor. iv. 6. shows us it is effected by the communication of spiritual LIGHT to the soul. "God " who commanded the light to shine out of " darkness, hath shined into our hearts, to give " the light of the knowledge of the Glory of " God in the face (or person) of Jesus Christ." We who are regenerated, or born again, have received light from God; we had it not in ourselves; we were darkness itself; we understood not the nature of either law or Gospel. We thought with the rest of men that to keep the law in the best manner we could, and repent of our sins, were sufficient to gain us the divine favour; and procure for us eternal happiness. But by this light we see the law has no power to give us life, it is a killing letter because of our sin; and we have all our lifetime mistaken its meaning

meaning and use ; " The commandment which
 " was ordained to life I found to be unto death."
 Rom. vii. 10. By this light there is also a dis-
 covery of the heinous nature of sin. While in a
 state of nature there are many sins which appear
 to us of little moment, but which are soul-damn-
 ing sins. " He that offends in one point is guilty
 of all;" says a wise expositor of the law. And
 the language of the law itself is, " Cursed is
 " *every one* that continues not in all things written
 " in the book of the law to do them." Such
 threatening and such punishment are inconsistent
 without sufficient cause. Of this we are ignorant
 till we see it by divine light—till the deceitfulness
 of the heart is laid open to view by the ap-
 plication of the divine law,—then, " Sin by
 " the commandment becomes exceeding sinful."
 Rom. vii. 13. By this light we see the im-
 possibility of being justified by the law,—or our
 own works. We being carnal, the law spiritual,
 we are no ways equal to the task, and therefore
 abandon all thoughts of it. " Knowing a man
 " is not justified by the works of the law, but
 " by the faith of Jesus Christ; even we have
 " believed in Jesus Christ that we might be
 " justified by the faith of Christ, *and not by the*
 " *works of the law*; for by the works of the law
 " shall no flesh be justified." Gal. ii. 16.

By this light we see the need of Christ to
 justify. This we never saw before, but were
 well contented (even if we had any notions of
 Religion, and a future world) if we did but our
 duty

tolerably well; and if upon any occasion either to oblige a friend or suit our fancy and inclination we made a little trip, and disturbed our sleepy consciences, we could easily lull them again by sincere repentance. Now the man is well assured "There is no other name by which he can be saved. No other foundation upon which he can build his hope with safety but "Christ the chief corner-stone." He having fulfilled the law and satisfied justice, has removed the curse; and opened the doors of heaven to all who believe.

The new birth is a new creation of the soul. Giving it a new bias or forming it for the worship of God; disposing it to love and serve him. "For we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto *good works*, which God hath before fore ordained that we should walk in them." Ephes. ii. 10. All the service of the unconverted is a constrained service. Their heart and soul are not devoutly engaged in it; and such service cannot be pleasing to God.

This new creation is wrought in Christ. And therefore those who are strangers to Christ and his salvation, are strangers to this new creation. True religion always begins with Christ; faith in his blood; hope in his righteousness. This is the one and only foundation of the regenerate man's hope. And this hope of heaven by the death and obedience of the Lord Jesus Christ only, will be so far from giving him liberty; and a disposition to sin; that it is the most powerful

ful stimulative to all good works. " Shall we " sin that grace may abound ?" God forbid ! Love is a powerful influential principle. There is no better obedience than that which is the effect of love. This enters into the nature of christian obedience. " We love him because he first loved us. The love of Christ constraineth us." The love of Christ manifested to the soul ; the grace of God imparted to the heart will effect a mighty change. It will teach us to deny *all* ungodliness ; not one species of it only, but all sin ; every sin of every kind. It will teach the drunkard to leave his drunkenness ; the swearer to leave off swearing ; the unclean person to abandon his frequent debaucheries. In a word whatever may be our sin ; however habituated in, if we are taught by the Spirit and grace of God, we shall part with it, with pleasure, and choose the way of holiness as our delight.

Sometimes regeneration is spoken of as a spiritual washing ; a cleansing of the soul. Frequently in the word of God sin is compared to dirt, to filth. There is a striking representation of the polluted state of the soul by sin in Exek. xvi. 4, 5. *Thou was cast out in the open field, to the loathing of thy person, in the day that thou wast born.* The soul is truly in a loathsome condition by sin from head to foot. There is need then, that it may be fit for heaven, that it be cleansed from this pollution. And as it is spiritually defiled, it must be spiritually cleansed. External ablutions will not reach the disease,
nor

nor remove the complaint. Many think to effect a spiritual cure by their own works; but these are insufficient. Not all our bible-readings—church-goings—sacrament-takings—alms-givings—and repentances will bring about this. No works contrived and wrought by man can cleanse his soul; and it is a mercy they are not required for this purpose. “Not by works of
 “righteousness which we have done, but accord-
 “ing to his mercy he hath saved us by the *wash-*
 “*ing of regeneration*, and the renewing of the
 “Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly
 “through Jesus Christ our Saviour.” Tit. iii. 5, 6. Nothing less than an application of the blood of Christ to the conscience by the spirit of God, can or will effect this great and blessed change; and this can and will do it.

This doctrine of regeneration is a good old scriptural doctrine for which our Reformers were not ashamed to give up their lives; though many in the present day who call themselves christian divines are ashamed of it in their discourses. And a little of something falsely called morality, is substituted in the stead thereof. True morality is the love of Christ in the heart*; “For the love of Christ constraineth us.” 2 Cor. v. 14.

The

- * Talk they of *morals*? O thou bleeding love!
 Thou maker of *new* morals to mankind!
 The grand morality is love of thee.

YOUNG.

The doctrine of regeneration was a favourite topic with our dear honoured deceased friend. She understood well the depravity of the human heart. And that without this change wrought all pretensions to holiness were vain. Like our divine master she enforced it wherever she went; and though in life ranked among the noble, and the great; was not ashamed of the following sentence: "Ye must be born again."

It might seem almost needless now to assert, that, the whole of this great change wrought in the soul is of GOD. But it is a difficult task to strip man of himself; and of his supposed ability to do good, till GOD is pleased to strip him; by giving him to know by experience, that he can do nothing. Here we may say it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth but of GOD that sheweth mercy. Though when this mercy is made known to the heart, it will make us willing to be saved in GOD's appointed way; and set our feet aright in his path. "But to
 "as many as received him, to them gave he
 "power to become the sons of GOD, even to
 "them that believe on his name: which were
 "born, not of blood, nor of the will of the
 "flesh, nor of the will of man but of GOD."
 John i. 12, 13. I proceed now to shew.

2. What is affirmed of the new born man, viz. that he overcometh the world; and the nature of his conquest.

By the world in the text we are I apprehend to understand sin, in its most extensive signification.

tion. Every sin. Every species of it. For the conversion of the soul is not a partial change. The forsaking of some sin; or turning from one sin to another. Grace is an abiding principle in the heart; and as it is said to be a new nature, so it makes a new man. Let a man before have been a self-righteous pharisee opposing Christ, a great drunkard; a notorious swearer; a filthy unclean creature; or a sabbath-breaker; a horrid blasphemer, and despiser of religion, the word, ordinances, and people of God; or suppose him by turns to have been all these, yet when called by grace; and effectually wrought upon by the Spirit of God, it will be so far from being a task to give up, and part with these sins, that it will become his daily prayer he may so do: "Hold up my goings in thy paths that my footsteps slip not." Psalm xvii. 5.

The christian or regenerate man, overcomes a sinful profane world. The unclean thing is not for his use, and it is not his delight. The gaudy vanities of this world have no attractive charms in them to entice his renewed soul. He seeks diviner food, and more sublime enjoyments; even righteousness, and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. Indeed there is nothing will please or delight him without the presence of his God. He is well convinced he has lived long at an awful distance from him—and he now desires and prays it may be so no more. The amusements of the world are not adapted to sooth his sorrows
or

or remove his cares*. Were he to give into them they would greatly increase his troubles, by bringing guilt in the conscience: a wicked deceitful vain world has nothing in it to suit the believing soul; he overcomes it by faith. How eminently this was discoverable in our dear deceased friend is generally known.

The believer overcomes the wisdom of the world. He knows the wisdom of the world, and the wisdom of God are two very opposite things. He is well assured that the world never knew God in or by all its wisdom. Nor even saw into the wisdom of God in contriving and bringing about salvation by the death of his Son Jesus Christ. The world by its wisdom is fighting against God†. Hating and opposing the

* I do not mean to insinuate that the Christian denies himself the lawful recreations of life. This would be to debar ourselves the comforts GOD and nature have provided us, and which our constitutions require. But the Christian denies himself whatever is sinful, and contrary to these.

† Not long since I saw an objection against the doctrine of satisfaction by the blood, and the death of Jesus, expressed in shocking terms indeed, "To represent the Almighty as requiring satisfaction for sin by the death of Christ, is to represent him like the grand Moloch; whom nothing could please but a human sacrifice." And then the question is asked if GOD could not have forgiven sin without first requiring satisfaction?" I shall not trouble myself to enquire what GOD could have done. I know he could have extended the creation if he had pleased, infinitely beyond what he has. He could have made every man an archangel if he had pleased; but it is evident he has not. So then if GOD could have forgiven sin without satisfaction (which we Calvinists believe he could not) yet by reverting to divine revelation we find he has not. Our sins were laid upon, and punished in Christ. Isa. liii. 6, 10. He is said to be the *propitiation* for them. 1 John iv. 10. GOD is in Christ (and no where else) reconciling us to himself, and forgiving our sins. 2 Cor. v. 18, and

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the Lord Jesus, and his salvation. It is the constant practice of men who can see no further than the light of nature, to go about to establish their own righteousness. Having never experienced the plague of their own hearts; and the want of a better righteousness than they have by nature; or can acquire by their own works; have never submitted themselves to the righteousness of God. Rom. x. 2, 3. The preaching of Christ and him crucified for salvation; faith in his blood for pardon, peace and acceptance with God, is foolishness to them, 1 Cor. i. 18, while the regenerate man discovers in it the greatest glory. It is in the cross of Jesus Christ he discovers much of the wisdom of God, in contriving a salvation which brings so much good to man, so much glory to himself. Here it was, mercy and truth met together; righteousness and peace embraced each other. Psalm lxxxv. 9, 10.—So that though the preaching Christ as the Saviour of sinners; as the way to the Father and that by his obedience and death, is to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness, yet to them who are called both Jews and Greeks, he is Christ the wisdom of God, and the power of God. 1 Cor. i. 24. The Christian's glory is the cross of Christ.

He overcomes the persecutions of the world. If any man will live godly in Christ Jesus he

Rom. v. 10. We are *cleansed* by the *blood* of Christ. 1 John i. 7. Redeemed by *his blood*. 1 Pet. i. 18. *Justified* by it. Rom. v. 9. *Sanctified* by it. Heb. ix. 14. And get to *beaven* by it. Rev. vii. 14. I should not have said so much, but I expect the objectors may see this.

must suffer persecution. This is what he must expect. It is part of his legacy bequeathed to him by our blessed Lord, "in this world ye shall have tribulation." John xvi. 33. The doctrine and lives of the godly condemn the world. And therefore they must expect to meet with opposition from it. They are to the world what Micahiah was to Ahab; they are prophets of no good concerning it; but evil. 1 Kings xxii. 8. Scoffs and frowns they must expect from the world. But these have no weight with them. To be accounted fools for Christ is their glory. The world cannot tell them so much of their folly, as they know themselves. Persecutions have followed some to the taking away of their lives. Many of our brave Reformers regarded not their lives in so good a cause. "They overcame by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives unto the death." Rev. xii. 11.

That he thus overcomes is not by any innate strength of his own. He has not to boast of a better disposition than others; or more fidelity in the service of God; he is indebted to grace for this: My grace is sufficient for thee, says the Lord,—and therefore rejoice. Without me ye can do nothing,—therefore live dependant. The regenerate man then lives by faith; Gal. v. 29; and overcomes through him that has loved him, Rom. viii. 37. I come now to speak,

3. Of the mean by which he overcometh the world, by faith: this is the VICTORY that overcometh the world, even our FAITH.

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It appears the scriptures do not treat of faith, as some empty thing, which no one knows any thing about but only in sound. It is not as the world say an idle notion; but to the christian it is the most substantial thing in the world. "Faith is the *substance* of things hoped for; it is "the *evidence* of things not seen." Heb. xi. 1. It is the very principle which produces true obedience to God; it will prompt us to obey from the best of motives, even the love of God. Hence it is said to be faith which *worketh* by love." Gal. v. 6. This faith is not of nature, but of grace; and as it comes from God is of the operation of his Spirit; so it leads the soul to God. It views God reconciling the world to himself in Christ; and reconciles the soul to God by Christ; because here it finds him a friend. While on the other hand unbelief keeps from God, in ignorance and darkness; and is the main spring of disobedience and transgression. When the Lord complains of disobedience, he at the same time complains of unbelief; "I will hide my face "from them, I will see what their end shall "be: for they are a froward generation, children in whom is no FAITH." Deut. xxxii. 20.

By faith we receive the testimony of God. The word of God is revealed to, and preached among all nations for the obedience of faith. Rom. xvi. 26. Faith in general is wrought in the heart by hearing the word of God, "faith comes "by hearing the word of God." Rom. x. 17. This in the hand of the Spirit is the main instrument in conversion by which the soul is renewed in
divine

divine knowledge, and blessed with spiritual light. "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the "soul," from its sin, ignorance and the error of its way. "The testimony of the Lord is sure," it is the infallible word of unerring wisdom. It is a word we may depend upon, and get much instruction, from respecting present peace with God, and everlasting glory hereafter. "It makes "wise the simple." Those who are simple and humble enough to seek instruction from it, shall get instruction by it. They shall be well skilled in the best of all science the knowledge of themselves, of God, of Christ, compared to which all other knowledge is not worth the knowing. Philip. iii. 8. "The statutes of the Lord are right rejoicing the heart," joy and peace accompanies this knowledge. "The commandment of "the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes: the "fear of the Lord is clean enduring for ever: "the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether, more to be desired than gold, "yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than "honey and the honeycomb." Psalm xix. 7—11. So that by faith the word of God gains not only assent, and consent; but becomes very high in our esteem. We receive it as the testimony of God; as the oracle of heaven.

By faith we receive the Lord Jesus Christ, as our justifying Saviour; as he is held forth in this blessed word of truth. Faith looks not upon its own works; leads not the soul to seek justification in its own duties. It hears God say whosoever believes in his Son shall receive forgiveness

giveness of sin. Faith gives credit to this testimony; it says amen to the word of God, so be it; and sings sweetly, "Being justified by FAITH, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ." Rom. v. 1. The believer wishes no other peace. If he can reach this enjoyment he has all he wants; more he cannot have.— Nothing will so much trouble him as when oppressed with unbelief, he cannot cast the anchor of his hope upon this ground, with that confidence he desires. When faith staggers the soul trembles. When faith is strong the soul rejoices.

By faith we are enabled to pour contempt upon the riches, splendour, and sinful pomp of this world*. "By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ *greater* riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect to the recompence of the reward." Heb. xi. 23.— 27. The kingdom of Christ is not of this world; it consists not of any thing pertaining to it. It is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace and heavenly joy. Rom. xiv. 17. The newborn man has a capacity for these enjoyments. He has a spiritual appetite, and therefore seeks

* The good man looks not upon riches or the good things of life in themselves as evils, nor does he despise them; but receives, if providence sends them as kind gifts. But it is the abuse of them he dislikes. And at all events dares not seek happiness in them alone. Can give them up if religion require it.

spiritual repast. The trash of worldly vanity, and sinful pomp, are despicable things with him. He sees infinitely more beauty in the person of Christ, and the mystery of salvation by him, than in all the glittering toys of a promising but disappointing world. It is but few whose circumstances are such as to give them opportunity when called by grace, to show the world they can give it up, part with it with a very good will. But this was eminently discoverable in the conduct of our dear deceased friend. She showed the world she loved Christ and his cause above all other things.

By faith we walk in holiness, and run in the commandments of the Lord. "By faith Enoch" was translated that he should not see death; "and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God. But without faith it is impossible to please him." Heb. xi. 5, 6. The regenerate man will seek to know the will of God; and when he knows it, will seek to do it, by the assistance of divine grace. In a word, it is by faith we enjoy the blessings of the gospel; the pardon of sin; peace with God, communion with him; walk in all holy obedience in life; are made victorious in death; arrive at the gates of the paradise of God, where the soul is received into the embraces of everlasting love, and faith swallowed up in the vision of glory.

It may now be expected, I shall proceed to say something upon the life and character of our honoured

honoured deceased friend, upon whose death we are particularly called together this evening. I must acknowledge that to give a very minute and circumstantial account of her life, and conduct, far exceeds my knowledge and abilities. But I will give you the best information I can.

It is now I believe near fifty years since she first engaged in the Lord's cause. In which it may with truth be said, she has been indefatigable. Her thoughts have always been employed in contriving ways and means, for the conveying the knowledge of salvation by Jesus Christ, into almost every part of this, and in many parts of other kingdoms. To carry on which cause, she annually spent the whole of her income; and that with the greatest pleasure. She knew the cause in which she had embarked was a *good one*; and as she was not ashamed to own it, so she was always ready to support it to the utmost of her ability; often leaving herself scarcely sufficient for the maintenance of herself and family.

The honoured instrument of her conversion was the late Rev. GEORGE WHITEFIELD, whose ministry was blessed to thousands. Raised up in the providence of God to go into all parts to preach the gospel to multitudes of sinners of every complexion. And as the providence of God was extraordinary in raising him up, so it was wonderful in the great success it gave him in his labours. Many were the SEALS of his apostleship, and MINISTRY, among all ranks, denominations,

nominations, and degrees of men: high and low, rich and poor; noble and ignoble; wife and unwise; among which number, through the great mercy of God, was found **THE RIGHT HONOURABLE SELINA COUNTESS OF HUNTINGDON**, who esteemed him through the whole of her life, as an eminent servant of Christ; and greatly assisted him in his various undertakings, both with her purse, and her prayers. When she was first convinced of her own miserable state by nature as a lost sinner, and embraced the doctrines of the everlasting gospel, she began to think of communicating this knowledge among her neighbours round about her*. To these her views seemed to be more particularly confined; among these she would probably have lived and died, had not their ingratitude, attended with no little persecution†, forced her to leave them, to seek a place where she might live, and worship God in a peaceable manner.

Being now from the place and neighbourhood of her nativity, she could no longer think of providing gospel ministers for any particular

* Ashby-de-la-Zouch, Leicestershire, where she was interred.

† This account I had from her own lips almost five years ago. Have heard it since confirmed by the testimony of several respectable persons dwelling upon the spot. However, I believe at that time they knew not what they did. Many have expressed their sorrow upon the occasion; and all in general great respect. At this time there is a greater appearance of the spread of the gospel there than ever there were. I have the pleasure of knowing many truly pious souls among them: May their number be increased.

place. Her views became more enlarged. She now began to think upon a mode for the spread of the gospel in every place. For this purpose, young men of piety and ministerial talents were educated and trained up at her own expence, with a view to introduce them into the Church of England; for to the established Form in the Church of England she was much attached. But in this point also her scheme was frustrated, and her hopes disappointed; they were refused ordination because of their tenets, though exactly consistent with the articles and homilies of that Church. It was now thought proper they should have other ordination, and go out into the world and preach the gospel of Christ in Chapels, and Meeting-houses. This plan has been pursued, and not without success.

She was no bigot, but open and enlarged in her sentiment. She did not look upon religion as confined to any sect, party, or denomination. A work of grace upon the heart was with her the grand distinguishing mark of a true christian. Wherever she could observe any evidence of this, she deemed such her sisters, her brethren. A pattern worthy the imitation of all the religious of every denomination.

While I had the honour, and happiness of Her acquaintance and correspondence, I always found her language uniformly the same. She knew well in whom she had believed; and her hope and confidence was always upon one foundation. Her triumph was always in Christ.—
Salvation

Salvation and victory alone by the blood, the obedience of Christ. And from a pamphlet* I have received, I am informed these were the source of her joy even in the hour of her death. I will read the most interesting parts of the pamphlet.

‘ Some little time before her last confinement, one of the clergymen whom she honoured with her confidence, spending a day with her as he passed through the town, she spoke of herself in a strain so remarkably affecting, that he could not but mention it afterwards.

‘ The subject of the conversation was the cause of Christ, which she always had so deeply at heart; and that led to the state of her own mind and expectations.

‘ Her expressions were to this effect, but more forcible than those feeble traces of them.’ “ I see myself a poor worm.”

“ Drawing near *him*, what hope could I entertain, if I did not know the efficacy of his blood, and turned as a prisoner of hope to this strong hold.”

“ How little could any thing of *mine* give a moments rest to a departing soul?—So much sin and self mixing with the best, and always so short of what we owe!”

“ It is well for us that he can pity and pardon; and we have confidence that he will do so.”

* Written by the Rev. T. Haweis, L. L. B. her Chaplain.

Here my dear friends we discover both the sentiments and experience of our honoured departed friend. Her confidence was placed alone in a crucified Jesus. His obedience even unto death, was the one and only foundation of her hope; and not any work or merit of her own: she had a good hope through grace in her own soul, that she should experience for herself, all that mercy of God which is promised to believers in the gospel, by our Lord Jesus Christ.

“ I confess, my dear friend, I have no hope
 “ but that which inspired the dying malefactor
 “ at the side of my LORD, and I must be saved
 “ in the same way, as freely, as fully, or not at
 “ all.”

It is a mercy when by the divine teaching of the Holy Ghost, we are made sensible of our wretchedness, and misery by nature, till then, we always entertain hope of heaven by the good works we suppose we have done, or expect yet to do. Nothing can humble us so, as in our own hearts to believe we are upon a level with the *thief on the cross*; with publicans and harlots in general, as to the obtaining the kingdom of heaven, or being worthy of it, but this teaching of the Spirit of God. What a mercy to have spiritual light in our poor souls, to know their state and condition!

‘ The friend said,’ “ Madam, I cordially join
 “ you, and feel with you, that though our lives
 “ may be devoted to the work of Jesus, and our
 “ deaths

“deaths the consequence of the service, it is not
 “to these sacrifices we could look for comfort
 “in a dying hour.” ‘She replied,’ “No
 “verily”—‘and enlarging on the idea of the
 “mixture of infirmity and corruption which tar-
 “nished all our best meant services, she added,
 “That a sinner could only rest satisfactorily on
 “one foundation, and would find nothing in the
 “best works of his best day, that he could dare
 “produce before GOD for its own sake—suf-
 “ficiently blessed and secure, if he could but cry,
 “God be merciful to me a sinner; and let me
 “be found accepted in the beloved; and com-
 “plete in him.”

‘To these in the course of a long conversation,
 ‘were added many like words of truth and
 ‘grace.’

‘To a paper of importance, written a few
 ‘months before her last illness, were subjoined
 ‘these words:

————“And as I have always lived the
 “poor unworthy pensioner of the infinite bounty
 “of my LORD GOD and SAVIOUR, JESUS
 “CHRIST, so I do hereby declare, that all my
 “present peace, and my future hope of glory,
 “either in whole or in part, depend wholly, fully,
 “and finally, upon his alone merits, committing
 “my soul into his arms unreservedly, as a sub-
 “ject of his sole mercy to all eternity.”

‘When the blood-vessel broke, which was
 ‘the commencement of her illness in NOVEMBER,
 ‘she said to LADY ANN ERSKINE, on being
 ‘asked

“asked how she did,” “I am well, all is well,—
 “well for ever. I see, wherever I turn my
 “eyes, whether I live or die nothing but vic-
 “tory.”

Such a view as this in our last moments, if
 we shall be favoured with it will make our hearts
 rejoice. When under such manifestations there
 is nothing terrible in death; but every thing
 agreeable. This, Sirs, is the blessed portion of
 all who believe in, love, and follow our LORD
 JESUS CHRIST, and as the PSALMIST says, “when
 “flesh and heart fails his beloved ones, God is
 “the strength of their hearts and portion for
 “ever.”

“She has lately, with great emphasis repeated
 “often,” “The coming of the Lord draweth
 “nigh. O Lady ANN, the coming of the Lord
 “draweth nigh!” “Adding,” “The thought
 “fills my soul with joy unspeakable, whether I
 “shall see his glory more abundantly appear, or
 “whether it be an intimation of my own de-
 “parture to him.”

“A day or two before her last illness, just
 “as she had come from her room to her
 “elbow-chair, she broke out in these remarkable
 “words.”

“The LORD hath been present with my soul
 “this morning in a remarkable manner: what
 “he means to convey to my mind I know not;
 “it may be my approaching departure; my
 “soul is filled with glory, I am as in the element
 “of heaven itself.”

“They

' They who knew how constantly her conversation was in heaven will conclude, that those who were around her might fill volumes, instead of pages, with her energetic expressions; but she has forbidden it, and the publication of her papers, and correspondencies.'

Though weakened by a complication of disorders and greatly enfeebled with old age, yet we find her intellects as clear within a week of her dissolution, as at any period of her life. And her mind at that time as much as ever employed for the advancement of the kingdom of Christ. Blessed is that servant who, when his LORD shall come, shall be found watching!

We now find her employed in thinking on ways and means whereby the gospel might be conveyed into foreign regions—where the means of grace are not enjoyed, and the grace of the means it may be presumed little or not at all known.

Her patience it seems was lengthened out with her affliction; she was more concerned for those about her than for herself. ' She said, tenderly, to Lady ANN ERSKINE and Miss SEUTT, whose long, faithful, and tender attachment to her is well known, " I fear I shall be the death of you both, (alluding to their constant watching with her); it will be but a few days more."

Prayer

OTAHITE in the SOUTH SEAS. The inhabitants are said to be " a mild but uninformed people."

Prayer engaged her soul through the tedious days and nights of sickness and pain; thankfulness for her mercies ascended with her petitions. We find her saying "I am incircled in the arms of love and mercy." And, "I long to be at home; O! I long to be at home." A little before she died, she said repeatedly, "I shall go to my Father this night" and shortly after, "can he forget to be gracious? is there any end of his loving kindness?"

DR. LETTSOM had visited her between four and five. Shortly after, her strength failed, and she appeared departing. Alarmed, they summoned up a friend, who was waiting anxiously below; he took her hand—it was bedewed with sweat—he applied his fingers to the pulse—it had ceased to beat—and that instant she breathed her last sigh, as he leaned over her, and fell asleep in Jesus.

Thus departed this invaluable woman, whose life needs no commendation; her praise will be ever in the churches. God be merciful to us. The righteous and merciful, are taken from the earth and few or none lay it to heart. The people of God need to pray to the LORD to raise up others in the room of those who are fallen asleep. However the LORD will I am persuaded carry on his own cause. When he has work to do, he is never at a loss for instruments to bring it about. And as to our honoured deceased friend I am persuaded she is now in better employment, and higher enjoyments than she could possibly be in, in this lower world.

One particu^r instance of her desire to depart to be with Christ I cannot forbear mentioning, which I was eye and ear witness to. When in London last summer, in June; I think the very last time I conversed with her; she appeared in extreme pain, and upon mentioning the burden of her infirmities and afflictions to me, I replied "Madam your release from these afflictions " would undoubtedly be a loss to the church and " cause of the Redeemer, upon which account " your life is really desirable; otherwise to your- " self from the pain and affliction you experience " it seems your death would be a kind release." She immediately clasped her hands, and replied with all the earnestness imaginable, " If it were " the will of God, how glad should I be if it " were this moment !" But after making some pause and recollecting herself, she added, " Well " but if I may live longer to be of any service in " so good a cause; to do good to some poor " souls, and honour my LORD, I am still content " to live though in the deepest affliction !" These words made a sensible, and I believe a lasting impression upon me.

And now my dear hearers you have seen what was the hope and confidence of this dear servant of Jesus Christ; and what were her enjoyments in the end. It is worth ten thousand worlds when we come to die, to be in the arms of the Saviour; to enjoy the love of his heart, and experience DEATH, that king of terrors to be a vanquished enemy. Be ye then followers of her in doctrine, in principle; put your whole confidence

fidence in the merits of Christ and the mercy of God; give yourselves up to him without reserve, you shall then find him kind and gracious to you as he was to her. The kingdom of heaven is not confined to the great and noble in blood; the crown of righteousness shall be given to all who love the appearing of Christ.

It may, and is no doubt beyond your power to contribute from your purses as she did from hers, for the cause of Christ. If so, it is not required. God expects from a man not according to that he hath not, but according to that he hath. Do in this respect according to your ability; and if in faith and love it will be accepted. Assistance of another kind lies within your power: many cannot serve the cause of Christ at all with their purses, but may do much with their prayers. Do not let these be wanting—that the servants of Christ may be many—the converts of righteousness numerous.

And lastly take comfort from the faithfulness of God with this his servant. The very essence of faith, lies in casting the soul into the hands of the SAVIOUR, expecting him to conduct it safe to heaven, and glory. The promises of the gospel, which are the covenant of JEHOVAH with believing souls assure us of certain success.—*And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the son, and believeth on him may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.* John vi. 40. This promise the LORD has made good to this his servant, he was gracious
to

to her, filling her soul with such consolations in the hour of death, that she forgot her pain; and in a most triumphant manner was dislodged her earthly tabernacle, and by the hands of angels carried into the bosom of Jesus. Thus we see death is eternal life to the believer; and as the things of this life close upon him, the gates of paradise open to him. I must conclude by saying God is faithful; he was faithful to our honoured friend; he is faithful to all his saints; he will be faithful to us if through grace we have cast our souls into the hands of the Saviour. Rejoice then my bretheren, eternal life awaits us; grace is glory begun, it is the earnest of our heavenly inheritance. One word to poor sinners who know not God. Without a divine change you are, you must be for ever miserable. To heaven you cannot go in your sins; and there is no other way there but by JESUS CHRIST; there is no other name by which we must be saved given under heaven. Seek to know him and the power of his salvation in life. Pray for grace to serve and please him. And look for the accomplishment of every promise. I add no more, God of his infinite mercy grant we may all be found of that number, who overcome by faith in the Lord Jesus; who shall sit and sing his praises for ever and ever. Amen. and Amen.

THE END.



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